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ABSTRACT

What has transpired at James Madison University provides a model for the successful implementation of a basic communication education program required of all first-year students. This paper provides an accounting of the efforts that made possible the commitment to the development of the program. The paper is first divided into two columns. One column describes events and concerns that needed to be addressed to make the program possible. The second column discusses how the management of these events and needs represent the application of many of the same principles that are often the objects of study in communication. The third section provides a narrative account of the resources that were necessary for the program's operation (staffing, faculty burnout, instructor training, and space). The division of the sections of the paper invites readers to consider their own specific strategies for bringing about similar changes. (RS)

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Unraveling the Administrative Tangles in JMU's Speech Communication and General Education Programs

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Unraveling the Administrative Tangles in JMU's Speech Communication and General Education Programs

Amid the rapid and profound changes in higher education there remains the need to provide students with at least some communication education. The educational formats for communication education are varied. Yet for many, there remains a fundamental belief that communication education is best provided by those who themselves are trained in communication. And many of us recognize that college students are greatly benefited by receiving communication education early in their academic careers.

What has transpired at James Madison University in the last several years provides a model for the successful implementation of basic communication education programs required of all first year students. This paper provides an accounting of the efforts that made possible the commitment to the development of the program. In doing so, the reader is asked to participate a bit more actively in the reading than is customary. The paper is first divided into two columns. In one column there is a description of the events and of the concerns that needed to be addressed to make the program possible. In the second column, there is a discussion of how the management of these events and needs represent the application of many of the same principles that are often the objects of study in communication. The third section provides a narrative account of the resources that were necessary for the program's operation. None of the following is offered as a recipe for others to follow at their own institutions. Instead, it is hoped that the division of these sections invites readers to consider, in a way they find most comfortable, their own specific strategies for bringing about similar changes. Although the two columns are organized, as best as possible, to be coordinated with each other, readers are encouraged to find their own best path through the paper.

I. Currently, the School of Speech Communication (SCOM) could be envied by many because of their increasing enrollments and their heavy involvement in James Madison University's General Education (GENED) program. As discussed by Fuller, and as will be discussed further in this paper, SCOM is providing instruction for approximately 3400 freshmen during their freshman year. This began in the fall, 1997 semester and SY 98-99 is our second year into this program. There have been many benefits derived from involvement in the General Education program. SCOM has increased the number of full time faculty in the School by 50%, the number of rooms dedicated to SCOM/GENED use by 100% and received equipment for classrooms and faculty offices unheard of in these days of level and declining budgets. The way this came about may provide lessons for others, since it is the result of an eight-year effort, culminating in SY 97-98.

In the spring of 1989, a survey

II. *Undertaking significant changes in complex organizations is no easy task. Even when most of an organization's leadership and members may be committed to the continuous improvement of the organization, the fact remains that changes can be too easily dismissed for proposing "a risky business." The greater the perceived impact of the changes on the routine practices of the organization, the greater the difficulties in overcoming the presumption favoring the status quo and arranging for the resources necessary for implementing the changes.*

Departures from the routine, especially those involving considerable structural and functional rearrangements, require considerable acceptance and commitment. However good the goals and objectives that guide operational changes might appear to their proponents, their implementation may never occur, or may not occur effectively without successfully soliciting the support of

was conducted on campus that revealed a fairly negative perception of what was then the Department of Communication. In the fall of 1988, it was decided that the department would be separated into two separate departments: the Department of Human Communication (HCOM) and the Department of Mass Communication (MCOM.) At that time the head of the Department of Communication became the head of the new Department of Mass Communication and the head of the Department of Human Communication was appointed following a national search.

A major effort was begun by the newly appointed head of HCOM to establish connections across campus with other academic units. He held meetings with deans of other colleges and heads from other departments who might have interests that could dovetail with those of HCOM. Simultaneously, he encouraged the HCOM faculty to make efforts to establish linkages with faculty from other departments. Out of these efforts came interdisciplinary programs such as a

others within the organization. Until those affected by the changes are persuaded to commit their energies and resources to its implementation, or at least be willing to not deliberately impede the implementation, little new will come about.

In organizations, especially loosely structured complex organizations such as universities, the presumption favoring the status quo is based on more than simple inertia. There is also some resistance to change that may be attributed to an unwillingness to spend energies on adopting changes and executing new processes and procedures. But those who see its consequences likely to have a negative impact on their own objectives also sometimes impede change. Some minds may fear that if someone else's good ideas are accepted, then that someone else may ultimately threaten the existing distribution arrangements. The ensuing opposition to the proposed changes in the organization's order can be understood with these three principles: (1) Those who offer changes deemed "worthy" are those

political communication minor (with the Department of Political Science), an advertising minor (with the Schools of Marketing, Art and Art History, and Media Arts and Design), and a conflict and business minor (with the College of Business.) SCOM also agreed to be a part of the Women's Studies interdisciplinary program. Additionally, a course in intercultural communication was created in response to a request from the international business program. This course also was included in the international affairs program and was accepted as meeting a culture requirement in the old liberal studies program.

A special effort also was made to establish a good working relationship with the English department, with investigations of joint freshman offerings and considerations of speaking-and-writing-across-the-curriculum efforts. Although these particular initiatives did not materialize, this ultimately led to SCOM's involvement in the development of a technical and scientific communication program at

afforded increased responsibilities; (2) With increased responsibilities comes greater status; (3) With greater status comes greater rewards. Claiming that proposed changes are for the good of the whole, and asking for the far-sighted recognition that productive changes benefit everyone involved are certainly "rational" appeals. But those who feel the pressures of short-term evaluations and therefore believe themselves compelled to protect their current status by maintaining the existing order too easily dismiss such appeals.

Protecting the status quo is also important to those who see change as altering their role in future policy planning. As new programs prove successful, the subsequent opinions of the initiators are taken more seriously and their role in determining the future of the organization is legitimized by their success. Their presence in policy planning ultimately affects resource allocation and the identities of the "important players" change accordingly.

It is not surprising, then, to find

both the undergraduate and master's levels.

In the spring of 1990, the Student Assessment Office asked HCOM to take part in a program that would involve the development of an assessment procedure that would have the potential of permitting students to test out of their oral skills requirement in liberal studies. Other departments were also approached about developing similar assessment procedures in their areas, but HCOM was one of the few that did so. Many departments were and are fearful of assessment and have dragged their heels in these efforts. By cooperating (and by developing some defensible assessment procedures) HCOM and then SCOM, after the unit was renamed, became an assessment leader on campus. In fact, at one faculty meeting of the university, the School Director was asked by the Vice President for Academic Affairs to describe the oral skills assessment procedures. SCOM was lauded for their efforts and held up as a model for the faculty by the VPAA. It subsequently became possible to use

in the history of successful change campaigns evidence of those principles that is the praxis of communication studies. As overcoming the presumption of the status quo and bringing about change in an organization is fundamentally a persuasive process in the organization's political realm, it follows that adoption of changes depends on selection of the appropriate communication strategies.

A fuller understanding of how proposals within complex, pluralistic organizations are accepted can be achieved by attending to the differences between rational and political models of decision making. Rational models, sometimes identified as prescriptive models, identify a process that proceeds orderly through the careful analysis of all, or at least most, of the relevant facts. Applying appropriate modes of analysis and evaluation, decisions are ultimately determined by criteria that are held in unanimity. Political models, in contrast, depend upon very different suppositions about the decision

some of the assessment results to justify the need for videotaping and playback equipment in our classrooms. This equipment is now the "older equipment" that will be mentioned later in this paper. By cooperating with Student Assessment, SCOM has benefited both by being able to justify more resources and by being portrayed as competent in this endeavor.

Since 1989, there has been a concerted effort to increase the credibility of the SCOM faculty in the eyes of the JMU community. The interdisciplinary efforts increased the contact of SCOM faculty with faculty across campus, acquainting faculty from other departments with the intelligence and abilities of many of the SCOM faculty. There was a perception of SCOM faculty at JMU as nonscholars. This perception was at the base of an overall negative perception of the communication discipline and the department. This perception appears to be a problem communication departments have nationwide. Whenever it is necessary to cut at a college or

making process. Sometimes described as descriptive models, this approach recognizes that decision making is more often a chaotic process, through which information is strategically manipulated, and decision criteria are the substance of arguments rather than the final arbitrators for selecting solutions. Decisions, in this model, result from the complex interplay of competing interests and bargaining.

Consider, for example, the role of alliances and allegiances in decision making. Decision making is rarely done in a vacuum. The relationship history of the decision-makers is as important, perhaps often more important, than the substantive issues of the discussion. As fundamental changes in the organization necessarily have effects on the whole, it is imperative that the proponents of those changes can be trusted. Trust is easier to confer on those we know, and that much easier with those known to share similar concerns and values. "Empire builders" and "operators" are regarded as threatening for their self-serving motives and it is easy to

university, communication faculty fear for their future, and justly so. It is probably the case that many of us would rather "perform" as teachers and teach our students to perform than engage in scholarship.

Partially in response to the 1989 survey, partially in response to directives from the administration, and partially because of the new HCOM head's conviction that respect comes the old-fashioned way -- it must be earned, the head began promoting a greater concern for scholarship within SCOM. He consistently encouraged faculty to engage in scholarship more than in the past and rewarded them for doing so. On the other hand, promotions, reappointments, merit, and other "perks" were denied on the basis of scholarship deficiencies. In SCOM, the primary emphasis had been on teaching for years, and it is probably safe to say that some of the finest teachers on the JMU campus were (and are) in SCOM. However, even though JMU had (and has) teaching as its primary focus publicly, it is a fact of life that colleagues from other disciplines never-the-less had greater

be suspicious of those who are attempting to enlarge their status in the organization. Unless claims to be motivated for the good of the whole are trusted, even the best-intended proposals fail to gather the necessary support.

But trust is only one thread that binds alliances. It is easier to support those who have a credible history within the organization than those without such a history. In most cases, having the approval of higher levels of the organization is an important currency for the evaluation of credibility within the organization. There are many ways through which the approval of higher ups is acquired, but true for most organizations is the successful performance of difficult and sometimes unpopular tasks. Administrators appreciate the implementers of their policy objectives. The accolades given for these tasks are like badges and ribbons, encouraging others to perform similarly, which partly accounts for the willingness of administrations to provide recognitions. But beyond their value as a symbol

respect for faculty who were productive scholars than they did for faculty who were not.

In the 1980-99 period a change was occurring at JMU in which greater scholarship efforts were being expected relative to promotion, tenure, and merit decisions. Gradually, the perception of SCOM has become more positive as faculty in SCOM have been perceived more as scholars than as "just teachers." It is unlikely that the campuswide committee that formulated the structure of GENED would have included communication skills had the faculty in that committee (which included no SCOM faculty) not had a more positive perception of the discipline than what existed in 1989. Further, without a more positive perception of the discipline and the JMU SCOM faculty it is probable that other departments on campus would have been called upon or volunteered to teach communication skills rather than turning to SCOM for this instruction.

As GENED developed, and departments were being asked to propose packages of classes to meet

of administration's support are the consequences of these badges on other units within the organization. Simply put, others regard these recognitions as indicators of the potential benefits that might come from allying with those who wear them.

The importance of these badges to the credibility of change proponents cannot be over-stressed. In each and every organization there are standards by which members are evaluated. And in each organization some standards are regarded as more important than others and convey more status to those who successfully meet them. It is, of course, essential to credibility perceptions that these higher status badges are earned in a fashion that also earns the respect of organization members. Accomplishments must be seen as achieved fairly, without injury to others, or as having been motivated only for self-serving purposes. For most people, there is no sense in attempting to cooperate with those known to pursue status only for themselves at the expense of others in the

cluster requirements, an interesting phenomenon began to occur. Departments from across campus began to contact the SCOM director and ask if SCOM would be part of packages in Cluster One. In every case, SCOM was being approached as the academic unit on campus expert in the teaching of oral communication skills. Although all departments were given the opportunity to propose that they teach oral skills, none came forward. As a result, all of the packages in Cluster One include a basic hybrid course taught by SCOM. In addition, as the learning objectives were refined in Cluster One, the director and faculty from SCOM were asked to participate in formulating these objectives. This was an extremely important process with implications for assessment and future instruction. It was very important that SCOM played a significant role in this process.

In addition to the above, the department head of HCOM participated in the formation of the Council of Department Heads, a group in which department heads

organization. Displaying badges thought to be earned unfairly is likely to discourage the formation of trusting alliances. Fairly earned badges invite respect, demonstrate the skills of badge holders at successfully meeting the demands of the organization, and helps position the holders as worthy allies.

It is probably no mere coincidence that the particulars, which identify worthy change proponents closely, resemble the constituent elements of Aristotelian ethos. Good sense and good virtue mean as much in today's organizations as they did 2500 years ago. Also essential to the advocacy of change is Aristotle's third component, good will. Perceptions of "good will" invite others to accept the claim that one's proposals are offered to benefit others as well.

In organizations, past performance typically provides the basis for evaluating motives. It matters that there is a close correspondence between word and deed. A history of sharing resources to allow other parts of the organization to develop new

could network and get to know one another better. He was elected the first Chair of the Council in 1993. This provided a vehicle through which many of the interdisciplinary efforts were begun. Finally, from 1989 to 1998, it was the practice of the Director of SCOM to make resources available to other departments when possible. This varied from transferring funds to departments with significant problems, lending equipment when needed, offering classroom space when needed, and the like. All of these efforts, were not only the collegial thing to do, they had a significant positive impact on the perceived credibility of the Director and the entire SCOM program.

From the perspective of the School Director/Department Head, participating in a campus-wide General Education program is an incredible challenge but certainly within the capabilities of the SCOM faculty. A major problem that had to be addressed was the opposition of some SCOM faculty to participation in the General Education program. Part of this opposition resulted from

programs, or providing support to those that need assistance, of altering ones' own arrangements to accommodate the special requirements of others are all important indicators of a genuine commitment to the best interests of other organizational units.

Being known as a "fair player" is therefore very important to successful advocacy within the organization. To become a "good player" it is also important to know the specific values and goals of the other players. To this end, it is very useful to have established the kinds of interpersonal relationships through which participants can share, without fear of reprisal, their "private" evaluations of their organization's operation. The point is ***not*** *that this type of information can later be used to manipulate other players. Quite the contrary, for to do so risks violating the critical bonds of trust that are, at best, slowly constructed. Instead, these types of exchanges confirm the interdependence of the players, provide a sense of commonality, and encourage the willingness to be*

a history of negative interactions between faculty and the upper level administration. The faculty was distrustful of an initiative they perceived as coming down from above. In addition, there is the problem of the threat of the unknown. To provide information, throughout SY 95-96 and SY 96-97 the topic of participation in GENED was brought up at faculty meetings by either the School Director, or the SCOM faculty member who would ultimately become the Cluster One Coordinator in GENED. Both of these people tried to explain the educational necessity of having SCOM be a significant part of a general education program. All faculty, both supportive of GENED involvement, and those opposed to it were encouraged to participate in these discussions. Other cluster coordinators were invited to School meetings to discuss possible involvement of SCOM in clusters other than just Cluster One. Efforts were made to explain the potential for resource acquisition (equipment, space, and personnel) that might result from participation in GENED.

available for each other.

The best planned strategies for dealing with other organizational units will, however, be to no avail if the internal members of the unit advocating the change are ignored. Their support is, of course, essential. Particularly if the tactical implementation of the changes becomes part of their responsibilities. To the extent that the internal staff is part of design and development of the proposed change they take ownership of its advocacy. All of the appeals so far mentioned are as critical here as they are in the relationships with external units, but there is even more that should be done. The internal staff, after all, often find themselves working harder during periods of great change, partly because of the increases in tasks, and very much because of the realization that the success of new programs depends on their efforts. Attention to their values and goals, and the capacity to cast the innovations as elaborations of what the unit has always been capable of doing, encourage their support and commitment. And, of

Likewise, efforts were made to explain the likelihood and desirability of increased interactions with colleagues across campus as a result of heavy involvement in GENED. After all of these discussions, most SCOM faculty were in agreement about the desirability of being in GENED. However, there were some who continued to disagree.

course, it is important to realize that it is not likely that every member will be equally enthusiastic about the changes, or for that matter, in agreement with the need for the changes. Opportunities for the voicing of concerns, and a communication climate that invites disagreement without reprisal are essential to advancing the program both internally and externally.

With a final decision for SCOM to participate in GENED, following several years of increasing credibility and greater involvement in the JMU community the real problems lay ahead. The implications for implementation of this program are staggering. The following is a discussion of these challenges, most of which are not "communication problems," but rather logistical problems for an administrator. Of course, they do involve communication, and where that occurred, it will be noted. The challenges/problems/ opportunities of implementing the GENED oral skills requirement fell largely into two major categories: faculty concerns and facility concerns.

Faculty Concerns

Staffing. At some schools with graduate programs, the teaching of extremely large numbers of students in a multi-section class is accomplished by assigning masters and/or doctoral students to the teaching of undergraduates in a basic oral communication class. (In some graduate programs this translates into graduate students with bachelor's degrees being assigned to teach basic communication classes.) Often this works well, but frequently, graduate studies are a distraction from teaching for the graduate students. This was not an option at James Madison University because there is no graduate program in communication there and because the

university is committed to quality education – which translates into providing instruction by faculty "with Ph.D. preferred/Master's degrees" in appropriately equipped facilities.

Many schools solve the problem of instructional staff through the use of massive numbers of part-time instructors. This is probably more true in urban settings than in rural settings. Indeed, SCOM at JMU has made use of part-time instructors in the past, but not nearly as much as schools in urban settings, because of the relatively small number of people qualified to teach in communication in the small rural community in which JMU is located. Mostly our experience has been very positive with the part-timers we have been able to hire. They have been well qualified and conscientious in their teaching. However, it is not possible to maintain consistency among part-instructors comparable to that among full-time instructors because the opportunity for supervision is so very different. Too often, part-time instructors teach early in the morning or late at night, and then are off campus during the day. This makes meetings difficult, not to mention other forms of supervision. In addition, many part-timers have other jobs, family commitments, etc., which take precedence over a part-time job, so scheduling must accommodate their other obligations.

The rationale for replacing many, if not most, part - time instructors with full time instructors was first articulated in 1990 and continued to be a part of the resource requests from SCOM to the administration to the present. This rationale was repeated every year in the department/school annual report. It was also expressed by the head/director whenever personnel needs were discussed with the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters. In addition, the head/director brought up this problem when the position of Dean of General Education was created and personnel needs were discussed with her. It was important to maintain a consistent message, and that was done for eight years. If the rationale were legitimate in 1990, it is still legitimate in 1998. In fact, if it were dropped or changed, this might call into credibility the head who made the argument in 1990.

All of the above suggests the very real need for a staff of full – time instructors for most, if not all, sections of the basic course in a General Education program. This is not an easy goal to achieve – especially when there are 3400 freshmen who must take this course during their freshman year. This translates into approximately 142 sections (with a maximum enrollment of 24), or 71 sections per semester. In the case of the School of Speech Communication (SCOM) at JMU, this was all in addition to an undergraduate program in speech communication that was

enrolling about 170 majors in fall, 1996, but which is now enrolling 350 majors. The entire faculty was already stretched to the limit, offering courses for majors, as well as some sections of the basic course in the old liberal studies requirements. It was apparent that to increase course offerings so that all freshmen could take the GENED basic oral skills class, it would be necessary to significantly increase the number of full-time instructors in the School. (As explained by Dr. Fuller in his paper, all students must complete the requirements in Cluster One of GENED, "Skills for the 21st Century," during their freshman year at JMU.)

In the situation at JMU it was necessary to explain to two Deans, rather than one, the necessity for an increase in the number of faculty in SCOM. The Dean of the College of Arts and Letters, the college in which the School of Speech Communication resides, had to agree with the need for more instructors as did the new Dean of General Education, the program in which the Basic Human Communication course would be used to satisfy General Education requirements. Of course, both of these deans would have to convince the VPAA that it was necessary to transfer resources from elsewhere in the university to SCOM. In order to do that the evidence supporting these arguments had to be solid and had to come from SCOM. In addition to the messages regularly given over the previous seven years, a meeting was held with the School Director, the Cluster One Coordinator from GENED (who is also a full professor in SCOM) and the Deans of General Education and the College of Arts and Letters. At this meeting the Director and Cluster One Coordinator presented a joint message in which the anticipated number of students in the 1997-98 Freshman class were broken down by sections of SCOM 121, Basic Human Communication. Essentially, the main thrust of this message was that with a maximum of 24 students per section, it is necessary to add six new full-time positions to the SCOM faculty in order to teach the anticipated 3300 freshmen. Anything less than that would leave some students unable to meet a freshman requirement.

Fortunately, the Dean of Arts and Letters and the Dean of General Education listened, understood, and added positions as was possible. Over the period from SY 90-91 to SY 97-98 the number of full-time faculty increased from 12.5 FTE to 23.25 FTE, to the credit of both the Dean of the College of Arts and Letters and the Dean of General Education. Both deans recognized the need to move from part-time to full-time instruction and provided resources to accomplish this change. Although there is still a need for more full-time faculty, the deans have provided as many full-time positions as the university budget will permit. Because we did not

receive the number of instructors requested, it has been necessary for instructors without the terminal degree to teach a five course load each semester and for SCOM to continue to use part-time instructors – though to a significantly lesser degree than previously.

It is important to note that all of the new positions for SCOM/GENED are Revolving Term Appointments rather than tenure track positions. Although tenure is not awarded to people in these positions, once they have completed a probationary period they essentially are in a continuing position so long as their work remains satisfactory and there is programmatic need for their instructional services. The use of RTAs at JMU in GENED and other programs has resulted in greater administrative flexibility in that administrators now are more able to respond to changing student demands and enrollment fluctuations. It has, however, resulted in at least two problems that must be addressed, one of which has serious implications for the GENED program.

Faculty Burnout. First, RTAs are being overworked to a significant degree. This is especially true of those without the terminal degree who are appointed with the rank of instructor. Assigned to teach five classes each semester, RTA instructors still are asked to serve on committees, even though their job description does not include this kind of service responsibility. Additionally, although their job descriptions include no scholarship responsibilities, those instructors who present papers and publish articles receive higher evaluations and thus, higher merit increases whereas those who meet the requirements of their job descriptions are likely to receive average or lower evaluations and merit increases. The bottom line is that RTAs without the terminal degree, at the rank of instructor, are being overworked to a significant degree and will, likely suffer burnout. This is a problem that should be addressed.

It would not be fair to discuss SCOM's participation in the GENED program without mentioning the extent to which most faculty in SCOM have made the program work by working well beyond their position descriptions. This is true of tenure track/tenured, RTA instructors, and RTAs at the rank of assistant professor and above. The number of meetings attended. Special "one-time only" classes of over 600 students to help upperclassmen complete the old liberal studies requirements. The learning of new computer software and classroom technology (to be discussed latter.) By the end of SY 97-98, the SCOM faculty was close to unanimous in their fatigue. College and university administrations would be well-advised to pay more

attention to workloads of faculty during times of major restructuring or they may end up with faculty who leave or, worse yet, faculty who stay and are burned out.

GENED Faculty Credibility. A problem that has begun to surface relative to the RTA appointments in GENED is related to what might be termed "professorial elitism." In recent meetings, tenure track/tenured faculty have apparently made derogatory comments about the GENED effort because it is staffed with RTAs. The implication is that RTAs are lessor members of the JMU faculty. These comments may be symptomatic of a problem, not of GENED, but of a use of RTAs by a university administration that did not adequately prepare the faculty for a new kind of faculty appointment on campus. Some effort should be undertaken to educate the faculty about the qualifications of RTAs so that it is clear that these faculty are just as (and more so in some cases) academically qualified as are tenure-track/tenured faculty. The problem of program credibility being tied to faculty credibility goes beyond RTAs. As was discussed earlier in this paper, an academic unit with faculty who do not publish may find its whole program lacking in credibility. Likewise, a program that is too dependent on part-time instructors may suffer the same perceptual problem, regardless of the actual qualifications of the part-timers. Professorial elitism has existed on campus in one form or another probably as long as college campuses have existed, but when mounting an important new program such as GENED at JMU, administrators who ignore this problem risk the success of the program.

The number of full-time faculty increased from 15.5 FTE in SY 96-97 to 21.5 FTE in SY 97-98 to 23.25 FTE in SY 98-99. There are also 7 part-time instructors who continue to provide instruction for both majors and students in GENED. The increase in FTE from fall, 1996 to fall, 1998 was 50%. During that period there were also faculty who resigned to take other positions, go back to graduate school, and the like. In addition, in the summer of 1997, the School Director requested a return to full-time teaching, effective in fall, 1998. This meant that over a two-year period it was necessary to conduct national searches for, hire, and orient a total of eighteen new full-time faculty members, including a new school director. Needless to say, this was a tremendous task, roughly the equivalent of hiring faculty for a brand – new, moderately large department. At the same time the personnel additions were occurring, it also was necessary to address training and resource needs which had to be met in order for the new faculty to carry out their instructional assignments.

Instructor Training. Among the nineteen learning objectives in Cluster One is one which is concerned with students being able to effectively make use of presentational software in oral presentations. This objective became the responsibility of SCOM since presentational software in public speeches has joined other visual aids in presentations. Because JMU has standardized on the Windows 95 and Office 97 platforms campuswide, it was a logical move to focus on the use of PowerPoint in SCOM's Basic Human Communication class. The entire Office 97 package was made available to all faculty members, both in their campus offices and at their home offices. While this made sense, many, if not most, of the instructors (both new and those already in the School) were not familiar enough with PowerPoint to either use it or teach it to students.

Since PowerPoint is extremely user friendly, some faculty began to teach themselves the software. This was not enough, however. It became obvious that some kind of training was necessary for our entire faculty. Several options were made available to our faculty. The Director of SCOM encouraged faculty through e-mail messages and discussions in faculty meetings to take advantage of one of these options. First, faculty could sign up for any of the software workshops made available by our Computing Support unit. These ranged from beginning, to intermediate, to advanced instruction in Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Since all three of these programs are useful to faculty in teaching their classes and recording and computing grades, the response of faculty to these workshops was very positive. Second, our Center for Multimedia agreed to offer specially scheduled workshops on these programs for our School. Small groups of up to seven were given instruction. Finally, the Media Resources Center has a program, which provides one–on–one help in the faculty member's office if requested. Probably the major problem the School faced was the date of arrival of new faculty. One problem that occurred with these training opportunities was the scheduling. Many faculty had difficulty scheduling training sessions because they were often scheduled for two to three hours, either in the morning or the afternoon. This obviously was in conflict with times the instructors were scheduled to teach. Scheduling of training programs like these should be adapted to teaching schedules as much as possible.

Because of commitments at other institutions most of them arrived shortly prior to the beginning of the fall, 1997 semester. This meant that it was necessary for many of our instructors to begin their classes before taking the PowerPoint workshops. Obviously, the ideal

approach would have been to have one or two days available right before classes began in which PowerPoint instruction would have been available to instructors. The important point is that if a department wishes to include presentational software as part of their classes, the department should ensure that the instructors have copies of the software at home and on campus and that they receive instruction themselves. Colleges and universities should provide training and departments should do whatever is necessary to motivate their faculty to take advantage of it. Of course, as presentational software such as PowerPoint becomes more commonly used at colleges and universities, some of these problems may disappear.

In addition to the presentational software, it was necessary to provide instruction to the faculty in the use of the equipment placed in the six dedicated SCOM/GENED classrooms. As will be discussed in the next section of this paper, new computer and video equipment was installed in the six dedicated SCOM/GENED classrooms. Knowing how to use a computer and a videorecorder was not enough to prepare an instructor to make use of the classroom. Although half of the classrooms had older camcorders and playback units that were fairly easy for someone to use who was already familiar with video equipment, there was new equipment installed in the other three classrooms that involved remote pan, tilt & zoom controls for the camera, and controls that selected recording or playback through an LCD projector. Mac and Windows computers also were installed in all six classrooms, with controls for switching back and forth between the two, as well as an ability to go on the university's network, so as to access the Internet. The instructors had to be familiar with the equipment necessary to accomplish the above and the protocols on the computers and the network.

The SCOM Director arranged with the Media Resources Center, the unit responsible for maintaining and installing the equipment in the classrooms, to provide training sessions for the faculty. These sessions provided the instructors with not only information in the training sessions, but also information handouts that they could subsequently use as references. This training was offered the week before classes began and the Media Resources Center continues to offer this training for new instructors. Again, as with the PowerPoint training, faculty members were encouraged by the Director, along with staff in Media Resources, through e-mail and discussions in faculty meetings, to participate in this training. In addition, it should be noted that faculty members may not have the key that opens the doors to these classrooms without having received this training.

Facility Concerns

Space. As was mentioned earlier, scheduling the number of classes that the GENED program required, in addition to those that SCOM was already scheduling for the old liberal studies program and the SCOM program for majors and minors required a significant increase in the number of rooms dedicated to communication instruction. The School already had three classrooms which were dedicated to SCOM and liberal studies use, which had been equipped with videorecording and playback facilities, and which were located in the building in which the School office is located. Unfortunately, even with these rooms, SCOM was being forced to schedule classes in rooms other than these three. These other rooms were located across the JMU campus and were not equipped with videorecording equipment. Some faulty members actually checked out camcorders and tripods and carried them to their classes in these rooms across campus. This was above and beyond the call of duty. Because of the lack of videorecording equipment many sections of the old liberal studies classes were taught without providing students videotaped feedback of their presentations.

SCOM requested additional classrooms and requested that these rooms be equipped with videorecording and playback facilities, a Windows - based computer and a Macintosh computer, a document camera, and a LCD projector (and screen) connected to the computers, the videoplayback equipment, and the document camera. This request was made to both the Dean of Arts and Letters and the Dean of General Education. One of the responses to this request was to indicate that it might not be possible to provide additional rooms to SCOM/GENED. The response from the SCOM Director was that without the rooms, enough sections of the SCOM/GENED could not be scheduled to provide instruction for all of the freshmen. Another of the early administrative responses was to ask if others could use the rooms in addition to SCOM. SCOM's response was that this would be possible after the GENED and SCOM classes were scheduled. (This left times before 8am and after 7pm (and after 3pm on Fridays.) One department has used these rooms during some of these times, but generally, these rooms have been used almost exclusively by SCOM.

SCOM also was asked if it would be possible to offer the GENED classes without all of the equipment being requested. SCOM's response was that it would be possible, but that the objectives concerning presentational software could not be met without the equipment to teach it with and for students to use it on during their presentations. The School Director also pointed

out that without videotaped feedback, we would be providing essentially the same quality of instruction as had been available to students prior to the 1970's. This would have meant even meeting the learning objectives concerning improved communication behavior would be less likely to occur.

Finally, the SCOM School Director was informed by the Dean of General Education that the additional three rooms were available for SCOM/GENED. In addition, the Director of the Media Resource Center indicated that they were using some extra money in their budget to equip the rooms as SCOM had requested. The outcome of all of this negotiation was that three additional rooms were provided equipped as requested - except for the document camera. The School Director worked extensively with the director and staff in the Media Resource Center, as well as with the Dean of General Studies to bring this about. Without their cooperation and support, none of this would have been possible. They obtained the rooms and the funding for the equipment. The original three rooms were upgraded to include the computer equipment and the LCD projector. The older video equipment in the original rooms, while serviceable, is aging and should be replaced soon. All-in-all, the six rooms serve the needs of SCOM and GENED fairly well.

Instructor Training. Just as it was necessary to arrange training for instructors in the use of PowerPoint as discussed above, it was equally important to arrange training in the use of the video and computer systems in the six rooms. Fortunately, the University's Media Resource Center (MRC) personnel volunteered to provide short training sessions for SCOM faculty (and faculty from other departments using the rooms) as was previously discussed. The MRC personnel also have been available almost instantly to help whenever there are problems with the equipment. Maintenance of the equipment in a program such as this is a major concern. With today's financial climate, it is difficult to keep a maintenance staff and budget. The importance of maintaining effective working relationships with other support units in the university cannot be overemphasized relative to any undertaking such as this. No academic department can do this by themselves. Without the help of personnel from the Media Resources Center none of the equipment installation or maintenance could have happened. The staff in MRC is greatly overworked, trying to keep up with the rapid infusion of technology on campus. Eventually, burnout may occur with these people unless they receive much-needed additions to their workforce.

It should be apparent that a program such as the GENED program at JMU is, while admirable educationally, a huge undertaking in terms of planning, resource allocation, cooperation among units, and the like. We must be scholars, take part in interdisciplinary programs, share resources, and respond to opportunities when they occur. Academic units that are isolated, perceived as unneeded by others on campus, and lacking in academic respect may have cause to be looking over their shoulders. No academic unit that most people respect and feel they need should feel threatened during a time of budget cuts. Likewise, a unit perceived positively for these reasons always will be in a position to take advantage of opportunities - and they will come knocking.